

IN
OUR LADY'S
PRAISE

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IN OUR LADY'S PRAISE



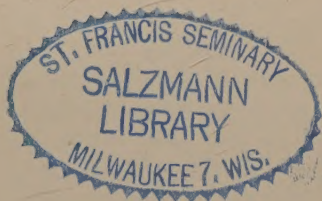
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IN OUR LADY'S PRAISE

An Anthology

COMPILED BY
E. HERMITAGE DAY, D.D.

With a Foreword by
THE VISCOUNT HALIFAX



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FOREWORD

AS one who, in distress at the neglect in which a parent or friend whom he knows to be worthy of all honour and love seems to be held by the world around, will make it his care to record the praises of him whom he loves, so he who has compiled this book, out of the praises of those who have loved Our Blessed Lady, many of whom are of our own English land, and have knelt at the Altars where we worship, has woven a wreath of song and remembrance to lay at the feet of that Blessed Lady, the Queen of Heaven.

Most glorious Lady, to whom it has been given to sit beside thy Son on His Throne in Heaven, help us to attain to the like glory !

Most blessed Mother, with whom we are one in the fellowship of thy Son, help us to be free from all spot of sin as thou, Flower of our Race, art spotless and free from all sin in God's sight !

Encourage us, O Glorious Virgin Mary, thou "in whose eyes we see all that we would and cannot be," to be perfect as thou art, and show us, "who seek thy help to pass thee by, thy Son," Jesus !

HALIFAX.

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NOTE

THE thanks of the compiler and the readers of this little book are due to many who have permitted the insertion of copyright poems. Mr. Hilaire Belloc has kindly made an exception to his rule, and allowed the inclusion of a poem from "Verses." Miss E. Nesbit liberally gave from her "Ballads and Lyrics of the Spiritual Life" even more than I had ventured to ask. The Rev. Leighton Pullan allows me to include one from his volume, "The Dark Ages." I have to acknowledge also the kindness of Sir James Rennell Rodd, Mrs. Tynan-Hinkson, the Rev. E. McClure (on behalf of the S.P.C.K.) in regard to a poem by Christina Rossetti, and the Rev. A. Shearly Cripps and his publisher Mr. B. H. Blackwell. Messrs. Burns and Oates have allowed generous extracts from Aubrey de Vere's "May Carols"; Professor Selwyn Image from his exquisite "Poems and Carols"; and Mr. Laurence Housman from his volume "Spikenard." The American Church is happily represented by the sonnets of the Rev. Dr. van Allen, Rector of the Church of the Advent, Boston, and Dr. Ralph Adams Cram.

In one or two cases I have been unable to trace the owners of copyright. If I have inadvertently overlooked any claim, I trust that the purpose of the little book will obtain indulgence for its compiler.

E. H. D.

HAIL, MARY, FULL OF GRACE, THE LORD IS
WITH THEE,

BLESSED ART THOU AMONG WOMEN, AND BLESSED
IS THE FRUIT OF THY WOMB, JESUS.

HOLY MARY, MOTHER OF GOD, PRAY FOR US
SINNERS, NOW AND AT THE HOUR OF OUR
DEATH. AMEN.

A DEDICATION.

O Mother Maid ! O Maid and Mother free !
O Bush unburnt ! burning in Moses' sight !
That down didst ravish from the Deity,
Through humbleness, the Spirit that did alight
Upon thy heart, whence, through that glory's
might
Conceived was the Father's sapience,
Help me to tell it in thy reverence !

Lady, thy goodness, thy magnificence,
Thy virtue, and thy great humility,
Surpass all science and all utterance ;
For sometimes, Lady ! ere men pray to thee
Thou goest before in thy benignity,
The light to us vouchsafing of thy prayer,
To be our guide unto thy Son so dear.

My knowledge is so weak, O blissful Queen,
To tell abroad thy mighty worthiness,
That I the weight of it may not sustain ;
But as a child of twelve years old, or less,
That laboureth his language to express,
Even so fare I ; and therefore I thee pray,
Guide thou my song, which I of thee shall say.

CHAUCER : The Prologue to *The Prioress'*
Tale, modernised by Wordsworth.

Nativity of our Lady]

NATIVITY OF OUR LADY.

We keep the feast in gladness,
When first that Gem of earth,
The Mother of Christ Jesus,
The Royal Maid, had birth.

The Rod foretold in story,
Which sprang of Jesse's kin,
The Rod which bore the Flower
That cleansed the world from sin.

The oracles of Heaven,
The word of Prophets sure,
Announced that wondrous Mother,
The Virgin ever pure.

The blessed among women,
Of mortals honoured most,
Conceiving her Redeemer
By God the Holy Ghost.

A stainless Maiden, springing
From David's kingly line,
She bore the Everlasting,
|She bore the King Divine.

The King of men and angels,
The Prince of perfect Peace,
Whose might had no beginning,
Whose might shall never cease.

To Christ the Son of Mary
Be glory, honour, laud,
With Father and with Spirit
The everlasting God.

R. F. LITTLEDALE.

MARY'S GIRLHOOD.

This is that blessed Mary, pre-elect
God's Virgin. Gone is a great while, and she
Dwelt young in Nazareth of Galilee.
Unto God's will she brought devout respect,
Profound simplicity of intellect,
And supreme patience. From her mother's
knee
Faithful and hopeful ; wise in charity ;
Strong in grave peace ; in pity circumspect.
So held she through her girlhood ; as it were
An angel-watered lily, that near God
Grows and is quiet. Till, one dawn at home,
She woke in her white bed, and had no fear
At all,—yet wept till sunshine, and felt awed ;
Because the fulness of the time was come.

D. G. ROSSETTI.

REGINA CAELI LETARE.

Gabriel, that angel bright,
Brighter than the sun is light,
From heaven to earth he took his flight.

Letare.

In Nazareth, that great city,
Before a maiden he kneeled on knee,
And said, "Mary, God is with thee,

Letare."

"Hail Mary, full of grace,
God is with thee, and ever was ;
He hath in thee chosen a place.

Letare."

Mary was afraid of that sight,
That came to her with so great light,
Then said the angel that was so bright,

" Letare."

"Be not aghast of least nor most,
In thee is conceived the Holy Ghost,
To save the souls that were for-lost.

Letare."

FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

ANNUNCIATION.

Salvation to all that will is nigh :

That All which always is All everywhere ;

Which cannot sin, and yet all sins must bear ;

Which cannot die, yet cannot choose but die—

Lo, faithful Virgin, yields Himself to lie

In prison in thy womb ; and though He there

Can take no sin, nor thou give, yet He'll wear

Taken from thence, flesh which death's force may
try.

Ere by the spheres time was created thou

Wast in His mind—which is thy Son and

Brother,

Whom thou conceivedst—conceived ; yea, thou
art now

Thy Maker's Maker, and thy Father's Mother :

Thou hast Light in dark, and shut in little
room

Immensity, cloistered in thy dear womb.

JOHN DONNE.

Annunciation]

FOR AN ANNUNCIATION.

The lilies stand before her like a screen
Through which, upon this warm and solemn day,
God surely hears. For there she kneels to pray
Who wafts our prayers to God—Mary the Queen.
She was Faith's Present, parting what had been
From what began with her, and is for aye.
On either hand, God's twofold system lay :
With meek bowed face a Virgin prayed between.
So prays she, and the Dove flies in to her,
And she has turned. At the low porch is one
Who looks as though deep awe made him to
smile.
Heavy with heat the plants yield shadow there ;
The loud flies cross each other in the sun ;
And the aisled pillars meet the poplar-aisle.

D. G. ROSSETTI.

ANNUNCIATION.

Yes, and to her, the Beautiful and Lowly,
Mary a Maiden, separate from men,
Camest Thou nigh and didst possess her wholly,
Close to thy Saints, but Thou wast closer then.

Once and for ever didst Thou show Thy Chosen,
Once and for ever magnify Thy choice—
Scorched in love's fire, or with his freezing frozen.
Lift up your hearts, ye humble, and rejoice.

Not to the rich He came and to the ruling—
Men full of meat, whom wholly He abhors—
Not to the fools grown insolent in fooling
Most, when the lost are dying at the doors.

Nay, but to her who with a sweet thanksgiving
Took in tranquillity what God might bring,
Blessed him, and waited, and within her living
Felt the arousal of a Holy Thing.

Aye, for her infinite and endless honour
Found the Almighty in this flesh a tomb,
Pouring with power the Holy Ghost upon her,
Nothing disdainful of the Virgin's womb.

F. W. H. MYERS.

THE ANNUNCIATION.

Silence and sweetness in the flowery place ;
The slender fingers that are skilled to guide
The whirling wheel are clasped ; for by her side
There stands the great Archangel of the Face,
Bending before her, Maid of David's race,
Elect of God, the Holy Spirit's Bride,
Within whose womb Messiah should abide,
To whom he speaks : Hail, Mary, Full of Grace.
Daughter and Spouse of the Eternal King,
Blest among women thou art evermore :
All hail, the Mother-Maid of Nazareth ;
The Burning Bush was thy prefiguring,
The prophets sang of thee in days of yore.
Pray for us now, and in the hour of death.

WILLIAM HARMAN VAN ALLEN.

THE ANNUNCIATION.

Through the sins and sorrows of four thousand
years
Earth has watched and waited, smiling through
her tears ;
Watched to greet the dawning of a brighter
morn,
Waited for a Saviour, Man of woman born.

Now the blessed Dayspring cometh from on high,
Now the world's Redeemer to her aid draws nigh ;
Bearer of the tidings from the throne of light
To a holy maiden speeds an angel bright.

In the chosen daughter of King David's line
God fulfils the promise of King Ahaz' sign.
Gabriel hath spoken, Mary hath believed,
And behold ! the Virgin hath a Son conceived !

Earthly sire He hath not, for the promised Rod
Of the stem of Jesse is the Son of God ;
Virgin pure the temple where He lies enshrined,
Holy One of Jacob, Hope of all mankind.

Though He take our nature, linked to low estate,
Though He stoop to suffer, yet shall He be great ;
Though His crown and sceptre be of thorn and
reed,
His shall be the kingdom sworn to David's seed.

Annunciation]

Light to lighten the Gentiles bending at His throne,
Glory of His people when His sway they own ;
He shall reign forever, King of kings confessed,
And all tribes and kindreds shall in Him be blest.

Through the brightened ages, o'er the ransomed
earth
All shall bless and honour her who gave Him birth,
Her of whom Incarnate came the Lord of all,
To uplift creation from the primal fall.

M. A. T. (in *The Living Church*, U.S.A.).

THE VISITATION.

Saints ! the glorious Mother greeting
Keep the feast in glad array ;
And with glowing hearts entreating
For the grace devoutly pray
Which Elizabeth, in meeting
With her cousin, found to-day.

Fruitful parent ! she that seeming
Childless and age-stricken one
Visits, who in secret teeming
With her own prophetic son
Greets her ; for in our redeeming
Is their fellowship begun.

Lo ! that Voice, yet mute, exulteth
As the mighty Word draws nigh
And Elizabeth confesseth
All that matron's dignity,
Whom she passing blest declareth
In her Fruit eternally.

" What can this congratulation,"
Meek she asks, " forbode to me ?
What this gracious salutation
Of the King's own Mother be ?
And the unwonted exultation
Of mine unborn progeny ? "

Then the Virgin so commended
Uttered forth a song of praise ;
And her psalm of triumph chanted
For the love of this sweet grace,
So herself pronouncing blessed
Thenceforth to the end of days.

Visitation]

Triune God ! Supreme and gracious,
Everlasting is Thy reign ;
Grant the Virgin's intercession
May for us Thy help obtain ;
That when this brief life is ended
Life eternal we may gain.

J. CHAMBERS.

OUR LADY'S EXPECTATION.

Like the dawning of the morning
On the mountain's golden heights ;
Like the breaking of the moonbeams
On the gloom of cloudy nights ;
Like a secret told by angels
Getting known upon the earth—
Is the Mother's expectation
Of Messias' speedy birth.

Thou wert happy, blessed Mother,
With the very bliss of heaven,
Since the angel's salutation
In thy raptured ear was given :
Since the Ave of that midnight
When thou wert anointed Queen
Like a river overflowing
Hath the grace within thee been.

And what wonders have been in thee,
All the day and all the night,
While the angels fell before thee,
To adore the Light of Light :
While the glory of the Father
Hath been in thee as a home,
And the sceptre of creation
Hath been wielded in thy womb.

Expectation]

Thou hast waited, Child of David,
And thy waiting now is o'er ;
Thou hast seen Him, blessed Mother,
And wilt see Him evermore :
Oh, His human face and features,
They were passing sweet to see :
Thou beholdest them this moment—
Mother, show them now to me !

F. W. FABER.

CHRISTMAS.

A Lady that was so fair and bright,
Velut Maris stella,
Brought forth Jesus full of might,
Parens et puella.

Lady, flower of allé thing,
Rosa sine spina,
That barest Jesu, Heaven-King,
Gracia Divina.

All this worldé was forlore,
Eva peccatrice,
Till that Jesu was ybore,
De te, Genetrice.

Of all women thou art best,
Felix fecundata,
To all weary thou art rest,
Mater honorata.

Well I wot He is thy Son,
Ventre Quem portasti,
There will He grant thee thy boon,
Infans Quem lactasti.

How sweet He is, how meek He is,
Nullus memoravit ;
In heaven He is, and heaven-bliss
Nobis preparavit.

Of all women thou bearest the prize,
Mater gratiosa,
Grant us allé Paradise,
Virgo gloriosa.

FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

ALLELUYA, ALLELUYA.

Now may we mirthes make,
For us Jesus manhood hath take,
 De Virgine Maria,
Only for our sins' sake,
 Alleluya.

The King of kings now forth is brought,
Of a maiden that sinned nought,
 Res miranda,
Neither in deed, neither in thought,
 Alleluya.

The angel of counsel that day was born,
As prophecies said beforne,
 Sol de stella,
For to save that was forlorn,
 Alleluya.

FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

MAN, BE GLAD IN HALL AND BOWER
THIS TIME WAS BORN OUR SAVIOUR.

In this time God hath us sent
His own Son in present,
To dwelle with us verament,
To be our help and succour.

In this time rose a star clear,
Over Bethlehem, as bright as fire,
In token that He had no peer,
Lord God, king and emperor.

In this time it is befall,
He that died for us all,
Born He was in ass's stall,
Of Mary, that sweet flower.

In this time came three kings,
That came from afar with riche things,
For to make their offerings,
On their knees with great honour.

In this time pray we
To Him that died upon the Tree,
On us have mercy and pity,
And bring us all to His tower.

FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

VIRGO, ROSA VIRGINUM, TUUM PRECOR
FILIU.

Queen of heaven, blessed may thou be
For God's Son born He was of thee,
For to make us free.

Gloria Tibi, Domine.

Jesu, God's Son, born He was
In a crib with hay and grass,
And died for us upon the Cross.

Gloria Tibi Domine.

To our Lady make we our moan,
That she may pray to her dear Son,
That we may to His bliss come.

Gloria Tibi Domine.

SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

MAIDEN AND MOTHER.

I sing of a Maiden
That is makeless ;
King of all kings
To her Son she chess.
He came also still,
There his Mother was,
As dew in April
That falleth on the grass.
He came also still
To his Mother's bower,
As dew in April
That falleth on the flower.
He came also still,
There his Mother lay,
As dew in April
That falleth on the spray.
Mother and Maiden
Was never none but she ;
Well may such a Lady
God's Mother be.

A CAROL OF THE TIME OF HENRY VI.

CHRISTMAS EVE HYMN.

There comes a Galley laden—
A heavenly Freight on board—
It bears God's Son, the Saviour,
The great undying Word.
And proudly floats that Galley
From troubled coast to coast ;
Its sail is Love and Mercy,
Its mast the Holy Ghost.

Now earth hath caught the anchor,
The ship hath touched the strand,
God's Word in fleshly garment,
The Son steps out on land.
Thou Bethlehem, the lowly,
Receiv'st Him in thy stall,
Thou giv'st Him rest and shelter,
Who comes to save us all.

E. V. KENEALY (from the German of
Uhland).

CHRISTMAS NIGHT.

I gaze out on the moon-lit earth,
Hushed, still and solemn all around ;
The frosty air is keen and cold,
The crisp snow glitters on the ground.

So cold and sharp ; and yet I know
On such a winter night of old
He came, the Holy Child, and lay
In manger-cradle, rude and cold.

The angels' song rang out to tell
Of Jesus on His Mother's breast ;
For there, as weary souls do now,
He found a shelter safe, and rest.

She worshipped, while His tender cries
Spake to her soul of mysteries deep ;
Strange visions passed of tears and blood,
Of cruel cross and death's calm sleep.

Yes, spotless Mother, He has come
As Saviour to a ruined race ;
That swathed form, so tender framed,
Is crucified to win us grace.

O wondrous joy, O living truth,
Which guides us as we journey on ;
God came in time with us to dwell,
The Word made Flesh, sweet Mary's Son.

Christmas]

Peace falls apace from angel-hands,
Peace for poor earth this Christmas morn ;
The bells ring out ; the altar gleams ;
For us a Saviour-king is born.

Then let us gather where the choir
At midnight sings a joyous strain,
To join and worship Bethlehem's Babe,
Till Christmastide comes round again.

E. LOUISA LEE.

MATER DEI.

Royal day that chasest gloom,
Day by gladness speeded :
Thou beheld'st from Mary's womb
How the King proceeded :
Very God, Who made the sky
Set the sun and stars on high,
Heaven and earth sustaining :
Very Man Who freely bare
Toil and sorrow, woe and care,
Man's salvation gaining.

As the sunbeam through the glass
Passeth, but not staineth,
Thus the Virgin, as she was,
Virgin still remaineth ;
Blessed Mother in whose womb
Lay the Light that exiles gloom,
God to earth descending ;
Blessed Maid whose spotless breast
Gives the King of Glory rest,
Nurture, warmth and tending.

Christ, Who mad'st us out of dust,
Breath and spirit giving ;
Christ, from Whose dear steps we must
Pattern take of living ;
Christ, Who camest once to save
From the curse and from the grave,
Healing, lightening, cheering :
Christ, Who now wast made as we,
Grant that we may be like Thee
In thy next appearing !

J. M. NEALE.

Christmas]

NOEL.

See, the lovely Babe asleep
On His Mother's milky breast :
Ah ! how tenderly caressed !

Let us kneel, and vigil keep
At this quiet cradle-side :
Mother ! may we here abide ?

Verily, we've naught to bring
For an off'ring at His feet,
Neither gold, nor incense sweet :

Nor a voice, wherewith to sing
Lullaby to His repose,
'Mid the winter storm and snows.

Only let us kneel, and pray
Quietly, sweet Mother, here,
Till the darkness disappear :

Till the Blessed One at day
Waken ; till He hear us cry,
Jesu, nobis subveni !

SELWYN IMAGE.

THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS.

“ What beheld ye o’er your sheepfolds
In your vigils, shepherds, say,
Ere the star of night grew paler,
And the darkness passed away ;
Tell us what ye saw before you,
Ere the dawning of the day ? ”

We beheld the Son, and round Him
In due order worshipping
Heard we all the host of Heaven
Strains of Alleluia sing,
Round the cradle in the manger,
At the birthday of their King.”

Mary Mother, Star of Ocean,
Mystic Rose, God’s Mirror bright,
Thou who in thy bosom’s chamber
Didst contain the Infinite,
We implore thee, we beseech thee,
Show the Saviour to our sight !

G. MOULTRIE.

NATIVITY.

This is Christ's birthday : long ago
He lay upon His Mother's knee,
Who kissed and blessed him soft and low—
God's gift to her, as you to me.

My baby dear, my little one,
The love that rocks this cradling breast
Is such as Mary gave her Son :
She was more honoured, not more blest.

He smiled as you smile : not more sweet
Than your eyes were those eyes of His,
And just such little hands and feet
As yours Our Lady used to kiss.

The world's desire that Mother bore :
She held a King upon her knee :
O King of all my world, and more
Than all the world's desire to me !

I thank God on the Christmas morn,
For he has given me all things good :
This body which a child has borne,
This breast made holy for his food.

High in high heaven Our Lady's throne
Beside her Son's stands up apart :
I sit on heaven's steps alone
And hold my king against my heart.

[*Christmas*]

Across dark depths she hears your cry ;
She sees your smile, through worlds of blue,
Who was a mother, even as I,
And loved her Child, as I love you.

And to her heart my babe is dear,
Because she bore the Babe Divine,
And all my soul to hers draws near,
And loves Him for the sake of mine !

E. NESBIT.

Christmas]

BESIDE THE MANGER.

There in the narrow manger, cold and bleak,
 My Lord, Thou art ;
And there within those Hands, so soft and weak,
 I lay my heart.

Beneath those tiny Feet I bow my head,
 O Blessed Child,
And kiss the straw that forms Thy chilly bed
 In winter wild.

Show me thy wondrous Babe, O Mother-Maid,
 Foretold of yore ;
The treasure on thy Virgin-bosom laid
 Let me adore.

That small Hand place upon my prostrate brow,
 O Mother dear ;
For crouching in His infant-presence now
 I quake with fear.

Mother of God, commend me to thy Son
 As here I bend ;
And oh, commend me when my task is done,
 And life shall end.

S. J.

EPIPHANY.

They leave the land of gems and gold,
The shining portals of the East ;
For Him, " the Woman's Seed " foretold,
They leave the revel and the feast.

To earth their sceptres they have cast,
And crowns by Kings ancestral worn ;
They track the lonely Syrian waste ;
They kneel before the Babe new-born.

O happy eyes that saw Him first !
O happy lips that kissed His feet !
Earth slakes at last her ancient thirst ;
With Eden's joy her pulses beat.

True Kings are those who thus forsake
Their kingdoms for the Eternal King—
Serpent ! her foot is on thy neck !
Herod ! thou writh'st, but canst not sting !

He, He is King, and He alone,
Who lifts that Infant hand to bless ;
Who makes His Mother's knee His Throne,
Yet rules the starry wilderness.

AUBREY DE VERE.

EPIPHANY.

Oh haste we then to-day to greet
Him Who is born our glorious King :
Of gold and myrrh and incense sweet
Your treasures to His cradle bring.
The Virgin Mother waiting by
Your offering scans with earnest eye,
Angels and Saints with jealous heed
Watch if you bring your best indeed.

O blesséd, who with eyes so pure
Have watched Thy cradle day by day,
Thy look may in their hearts endure,
Brightening their dim and weary way !
Blest, whom sweet thoughts of Christmas-tide
Through all the year may guard and guide,
As on those sages journeying smiled
In dreams the Mother and the Child.

J. KEBLE.

EPIPHANY.

The Eastern kings before Him knelt,
And rarest offerings brought ;
The shepherds worshipped and adored
The wonders God had wrought.
They saw the crown for Israel's King,
The future's glorious part—
But all these things the Mother kept
And pondered in her heart.

Now we that Maiden-Mother
The Queen of heaven call ;
And the Child we call our Jesus,
Saviour and Judge of all.
But the star that shone in Bethlehem
Shines still, and shall not cease ;
And we listen still to the tidings
Of glory and of peace.

A. A. PROCTOR.

Candlemas]

CANDLEMAS.

The angel-lights of Christmas morn
Which shot across the sky,
Away they pass at Candlemas,
They sparkle and they die.

Comfort of earth is brief at best,
Although it be divine ;
Like funeral lights for Christmas gone,
Old Simeon's tapers shine.

And then for eight long weeks and more
We wait in twilight grey,
Till the high candle sheds a beam
On Holy Saturday.

We wait along the penance-tide
Of solemn fast and prayer,
While song is hushed and lights grow dim
In the sin-laden air.

And while the sword in Mary's soul
Is driven home, we hide
In our own hearts, and count the wounds
Of passion and of pride.

And still, though Candlemas be spent,
And Alleluias o'er,
Mary is music in our need,
And Jesus light in store.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.

TO OUR LADY AT THE CROSS.

Mother disconsolate,
Silent, with thee we wait,
Watching the end ;
How shall we mourn with thee
Him, Who on Calvary
Dies, our best Friend ?

How shall we love with thee
Him, Who to set us free,
Meekly is bound ?
Now, with thee, calm abide
Where, from His pierced side,
Blood stains the ground ? !

How shall we watch thee bear
Sorrows He bids thee share,—
Son's strangest gift ?
How feel the sword with thee,
How in this agony
Eyes to Him lift ?

How shall we bear with thee
Words, from the cruel tree,
Lips Divine speak ?
How with thee take our place,
Spotless and full of grace,
We, sinful, weak ?

Woman, behold thy Son,
Jesus the Holy One,
Bloodstained and faint !
How can we restless be,
When, Lady, thou and He
Make no complaint ?

Good Friday]

O be it ours to know
Some of thy bitter woe,
Some of thy bliss :
Some it can only be,
We are so unlike thee,—
Christ grant us this !

W. CHATTERTON DIX.

EASTER.

He veiled His awful footsteps, our all-subduing
Lord,
Until the blessed Magdalene beheld Him and
adored,
But through the veil the Spouse may see, for her
heart is as His own,
That to His Mother or by sight or touch He made
Him known.
And e'en as from His manger-bed He gave her
His first smile,
So now, while seraphs wait, He talks apart with
her awhile ;
That thou of all the forms, which to thee His
image wear,
Might'st own thy parents first, with thy prime
of loving care.

J. KEBLE.

THE ASCENSION.

Why is thy face so lit with smiles,
Mother of Jesus, why ?
And wherefore is thy beaming look
So fixed upon the sky ?

From out thine overflowing eyes
Bright lights of gladness part,
As though some gushing fount of joy
Had broken in thy heart.

Mother, how canst thou smile to-day ?
How can thine eyes be bright,
When He, thy life, thy love, thine all,
Hath vanished from thy sight ?

His rising form on Olivet
A summer's shadow cast ;
The branches of the hoary trees
Drooped as the shadow passed.

And as he rose with all His train
Of righteous souls around,
His blessing fell into thine heart,
Like dew into the ground.

Yes, He hath left thee, Mother dear ;
His throne is far above ;
How canst thou be so full of joy
When thou hast lost thy Love ?

Why do not thy sweet hands detain
His Feet upon their way ?
Oh, why doth not the Mother speak
And bid her Son to stay ?

Ah no ! thy love is rightful love,
From all self-seeking free ;
The change that is such gain to Him
Can be no loss to thee.

F. W. FABER.

The Passing of Mary]

MATER DOLOROSA.

From her He passed ; yet still with her
The endless thought of Him found rest,
A sad but sacred branch of myrrh
For ever folded in her breast.

A Boreal winter void of light—
Such seemed her widowed days forlorn :
She slept, but in her breast all night
Her heart lay waking till the morn.

Sad flowers on Calvary that grew ;
Sad fruits that ripened from the Cross ;
These were the only joys she knew :
Yet all but these she counted loss.

Love strong as Death ! She lived through thee
That mystic life whose every breath
From Life's low harpstring amorously
Draws out the sweetened name of Death.

Love stronger far than Death or Life !
Thy martyrdom was o'er at last :
Her eyelids dropped ; and without strife
To Him she loved her spirit passed.

AUBREY DE VERE.

THE ASSUMPTION.

Who is shee that assends so high
Next the heavenlye Kinge,
Round about whome angells flie
And her prayes singe ?

Who is shee that, adorned with light,
Makes the sunne her robe,
At whose feete the queene of night
Layes her changing globe ?

To that crowne direct thine eye,
Which her heade attyres ;
There thou mayst her name discrie
Wrytt in starry fires.

This is shee, in whose pure wombe
Heaven's Prince remained ;
Therefore in no earthly tombe
Cann shee be containd.

Heaven shee was, which held that fire
Whence the world tooke light,
And to heaven doth now aspire,
Flames with flames to unite.

Shee that did soe clearly shyne
When our day begunne,
See, how bright her beames decline
Nowe shee sytts with the sunne.

SIR JOHN BEAUMONT.

THE ASSUMPTION.

Maria, men and angels sing,
Maria, Mother of our King,
Live, rosy Princess, live ; and may the bright
Crown of a most incomparable light
Embrace thy radiant brows. Oh, may the best
Of everlasting joys bathe thy white breast.
Live, our chaste Love, the holy Mirth
Of heaven, the humble Pride of earth.
Live, Crown of women, Queen of men ;
Live, Mistress of our song. And when
Our weak desires have done their best,
Sweet angels come and sing the rest.

RICHARD CRASHAW.

ASSUMPTA EST MARIA.

The Father saith, "Welcome, my Daughter":
Saith the Spirit, "Welcome, my Spouse":
What have angels and archangels brought her?
Stars for her brows.

"Welcome, Mother," the Son saith only,
"Welcome, Mother." The years were slow
While she waited—the years were lonely—
The summons to go.

Twelve long years of winter and summer,
Feeding patient his altar-light,
Michael tarried—the lordly comer
Whose torch was bright.

Now, the Three in Unity claim her
Close to each in the tenderest bond;
Now, the Three in Unity name her
Holy and fond.

Now, the angels float from the azure,
Kiss her feet and her mantle's rim;
She looks up at her Son, her Treasure,
Hungry for Him.

Little feet that were wont to falter,
Little fingers her lips once kissed:
Ages, spaces, His will can alter,
Yea, as He list.

Mother of Christ, and all men's Mother,
Where thou sittest the stars between,
Pluck His robe for His toiling brother
Stricken with sin.

Assumption]

Yea, the strong desire of His passion :

Yea, the fruit of his mortal pain—

Intercede for thy mournful nation,

Mother of men.

Intercede for thy mournful nation

Toiling, stricken, seething beneath—

Yea, the strong desire of His passion

Bought with His death.

KATHARINE TYNAN HINKSON.

THE ASSUMPTION.

They laid her down, all womanhood's crown,
with holy Mass and prayer,
And they carved the sign of the Cross divine
above her with loving care,
They deemed she would lie till the trumpet-cry
should waken the dead from gloom ;
But He Who in fight had quelled death's might,
hath opened His Mother's tomb.

The body fair hath passed away from out that
hallowed ground,
And roses bloom where Mary lay, and lilies
spring around :
The winding-sheet which wrapped her feet no
longer holds the dead,
And useless lies the wimple white which bound
the Virgin's head.

Yet not for her a robe of gold with broidered
art is meet ;
Christ clothes her with the radiant sun, the
moon is at her feet ;
A crown of beamy stars is set upon her maiden
brow ;
Her soul doth magnify the Lord, high is the
lowly now !

R. F. LITTLEDALE.

AVE MARIA.

THIS SALUTATION IS TAKEN OF THE GOSPEL OF THE GREETING OF THE ANGEL GABRIEL AND OF ELIZABETH, AND IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF OUR HEALTH. AND THEREFORE THIS WORD AVE SPELLED BACKWARD IS EVA, FOR LIKE AS EVE TALKING WITH THE FIEND WAS THE BEGINNING OF OUR PERDITION, SO OUR LADY'S TALKING WITH THE ANGEL WHEN HE GREETED HER WITH THIS AVE WAS THE ENTRY OF OUR REDEMPTION. AND SO EVA IS TURNED INTO AVE, FOR OUR SORROW IS TURNED INTO JOY BY MEANS OF OUR LADY. FOR EVA IS AS MUCH TO SAY AS WOE, AND AVE IS AS MUCH TO SAY AS JOY, OR WITHOUT WOE. THEREFORE, MEEKLY AND REVERENTLY THANKING THIS GLORIOUS QUEEN OF HEAVEN, AND MOTHER OF OUR SAVIOUR, FOR OUR DELIVERANCE, SAY WE DEVOUTLY TO HER AVE MARIA, HAIL MARY.

The Mirror of Our Lady.

JESUS AND MARY.

Mary the Dawn, but Christ the perfect Day :
Mary the Gate, but Christ the heavenly Way.

Mary the Root, but Christ the mystic Vine :
Mary the Grape, but Christ the sacred Wine.

Mary the Corn-sheaf, Christ the living Bread :
Mary the Rose-tree, Christ the Rose blood-red.

Mary the Fount, but Christ the cleansing Flood :
Mary the Chalice, Christ the saving Blood.

Mary the Temple, Christ the temple's Lord :
Mary the Shrine, but Christ its God adored.

Mary the Beacon, Christ the Haven's Rest :
Mary the Mirror, Christ the Vision blest.

MARY MOTHER.

Mary mother, well thou be !
Mary mother, think on me ;
Maiden and mother was never none
Together, Lady save thee alone.
Sweet Lady, maiden clean,
Shield me from ill, shame and teen ;
Out of sin, Lady, shield thou me.
And out of debt for charity.
Lady, for thy joyes five,
Get me grace in this live,
To know and keep over all thing,
Christian faith and God's bidding.
And truly win all that I need
To me and mine clothe and feed.
Help me, Lady, and all mine ;
Shield me, Lady, from hell pine ;
Shield me, Lady, from villainy
And from all wicked company.

JOHN WOTTON.

MOTHER AND SON.

Who kneel to Mary, kneel to Mary's Son,
And therefore to the Mother-Maid we cry
Because her Son is God ; no rite profane,
No goddess-worshipping idolatry
Is ours ; to Him due honour we accord
Unlimited, unquestioning, entire,
The perfect service of obedient love ;
To her such limited and mediate power
As may befit a creature glorified,
Brightest and purest of the white-robed band
Who stand for aye before the throne of God,
One who perchance may pour, and not in vain,
An intercession for the little flock
Purchased by Jesu's all-redeeming blood.

H. N. OXENHAM.

Our Lady's Titles]

THE NAMES OF OUR LADY.

Around thy starry crown are wreathed
So many names divine ;
Which is the dearest to my heart,
And the most worthy thine ?

Star of the Sea : we kneel and pray
When tempests raise their voice ;
Star of the Sea ! the haven reached,
We call thee, and rejoice.

Help of the Christian : in our need
Thy mighty aid we claim ;
If we are faint and weary, then
We trust in that dear name.

Bright Queen of Heaven : when we are sad
Best solace of our pains ;
It tells us though on earth we toil
Our Mother lives and reigns.

Refuge of Sinners : many a soul
By guilt cast down, and sin,
Has learned through this dear name of thine
Pardon and peace to win.

Health of the Sick : when anxious hearts
Watch by the sufferer's bed,
On this sweet name of thine they lean,
Consoled and comforted.

Mother of Sorrows : many a heart
Half-broken by despair,
Has laid its burden by the cross
And found a Mother there.

[*Our Lady's Titles*]

Fair Queen of Virgins : thy pure band,
The lilies round thy throne,
Love the dear title which they bear
Most that it is thine own.

True Queen of Martyrs : if we shrink
From want, or pain, or woe,
We think of the sharp sword that pierced
Thy heart, and call thee so.

Mary : the dearest name of all
The holiest and the best ;
The first low word that Jesus lisped
Laid on His Mother's breast.

Mary : the name that Gabriel spoke
The name that conquers hell ;
Mary, the name that through high heaven
The angels love so well.

A. A. PROCTOR.

Mary Magnified]

MARY MAGNIFIED.

In alternate measure chanting, daily sing we
Mary's praise ;
And, in strains of glad rejoicing, to the Lord our
voices raise.

With a twofold choir repeating Mary's never-
dying fame,
Let each ear the praises gather, which our
grateful tongues proclaim.

Judah's ever-glorious Daughter—chosen Mother
of the Lord—
Who to weak and fallen manhood all its ancient
worth restored.

From the Everlasting Father, Gabriel brought the
glad decree,
That, the Word Divine conceiving, she should set
poor sinners free.

Of all virgins pure, the purest—ever stainless,
ever bright—
Still from grace to grace advancing, fairest
Daughter of the Light.

Wondrous title—who shall tell it?—whilst the
Word Divine she bore,
Though in Mother's name rejoicing, Virgin purer
than before.

By a woman's disobedience, eating the forbidden
tree,
Was the world betrayed and ruined—was by
Woman's aid set free.

[*Mary Magnified*]

In mysterious mode a Mother, Mary did her God
conceive,

By Whose grace, through saving waters, man did
heavenly truth receive.

By no empty dreams deluded, for the Pearl
which Mary bore,

Men, all earthly wealth resigning, still are rich
for evermore.

For her Son a seamless tunic Mary's careful
hand did weave ;

O'er that tunic fiercely gambling, sinners Mary's
heart did grieve.

Clad in helmet of salvation, clad in breastplate
shining bright,

May the hand of Mary guide us to the realms
of endless light.

"Amen ; Amen" ; loudly cry we—may she, when
the fight is won,

O'er the avenging fires triumphing, lead us safely
to her Son.

Holy angels gathering round us, lo, His saving
name we greet ;

Writ in books of life eternal, may we still that
name repeat.

T. J. POTTER, from the Latin of St. Cuchumneus.

The Mystic Rose]

ROSA MYSTICA.

Herself a rose, who bore the Rose,
She bore the Rose and felt its thorn.
All Loveliness new-born
Took on her bosom its repose,
And slept and woke there night and morn.

Lily herself, she bore the one
Fair Lily ; sweeter, whiter, far
Than she or others are :
The Sun of Righteousness Her Son,
She was His morning star.

She gracious, He essential Grace,
He was the Fountain, she the rill :
Her goodness to fulfil
And gladness, with proportioned pace
He led her steps thro' good and ill.

Christ's mirror she of grace and love,
Of beauty and of life and death :
By hope and love and faith
Transfigured to His Likeness, " Dove,
Spouse, Sister, Mother," Jesus saith.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

TO OUR LADY.

Dear Mother, in whose eyes I see
All that I would and cannot be,
Let thy pure light for ever shine,
Though dimly, through this life of mine !

Though what I dream, and what I do,
In prayer's despite are always two,
Light me, through maze of deeds undone,
O thou whose deeds and dreams are one !

And though through mists of strife and tears,
A world away my star appears,
Yet let Death's sunrise shine on me,
Still reaching arms and heart to thee !

E. NESBIT.

Sorrowful Mother]

MATER DOLOROSA.

Speak not, but kneel ; the light is low,
The still, grey shadows cluster round ;
Speak not, but kneel and learn to know
The perfect sorrow that hath crowned
Those eyes with such a depth of tears,
Wherein the passion of the years
Speaks without any sound.

The toil of human hopes and fears
Within their pitying depths there lies,
And mystic charm for him that hears
Their silent questions, mute replies ;
And sadness, linked with love that fills
Life's cup with wondrous wine, and stills
Life's turmoil and surprise.

Mary, that hast the woman's heart,
Wed with the meekness of the dove,
Pray that we too, world-worn, have part
With Christ and thee in heaven above ;
All other longing we resign ;
His grace is infinite, and thine
More than a mother's love.

R. R. R.

SALUS INFIRMORUM.

Mary, our Mother dear,
Health of the weak,
Sick are our souls with fear—
Jesus we seek :
Dark lower the clouds around,
Sunshine grows dim ;
Safety with thee is found—
Lead us to Him.
Oft have we lost the track,
Fierce our dark foe,
Striving to drive us back
While on we go :
Not always strong to fight,
Weakened by sin,
Lend us thine arm of might—
Help us to win.
When in our deepest need,
Sin-scarred, undone,
Gently thy children lead
Home to thy Son :
He, our Physician kind,
Easing sore pain,
All our deep wounds shall bind—
Wash out each stain.
He, our True Food, bestow.
Strength for the way ;
Bring us with thee to know
Love's perfect day :
Grant us at last a place
Low at thy feet,
There to behold thy face,
Mother, most sweet.

Health of the Weak]

There to rejoice at last,
Tear-stains no more,
Trials and sorrows past,
Gained now the shore :
There linked in love divine,
Mother and Son,
Where the lamps burn and shine,
God, Three in One.

ELVIRA LOUISA LEE.

[*Maiden and Mother*]

MATER AMABILIS.

Ave Maria ! O Maiden, O Mother !

Fondly thy children are calling on thee,
Thine are the graces unclaimed by another,
Sinless and beautiful, Star of the Sea !

Mater Amabilis, ora pro nobis !

Pray for thy children who call upon thee ;
Ave Sanctissima ! Ave purissima !

Sinless and beautiful Star of the Sea.

Ave Maria ! the night shades are falling,

Softly our voices arise unto thee,
Earth's lonely exiles for succour are calling,
Sinless and beautiful, Star of the Sea.

Mater Amabilis, ora pro nobis ! etc.

Ave Maria ! thy children are kneeling,

Words of endearment are murmured to thee ;
Softly thy spirit upon us is stealing,
Sinless and beautiful, Star of the Sea.

Mater Amabilis, ora pro nobis ! etc.

Ave Maria ! thou portal of Heaven,

Harbour of refuge, to thee do we flee ;
Lost in the darkness, by stormy winds driven,
Shine on our pathway, fair Star of the Sea.

Mater Amabilis, ora pro nobis !

Show us Thy Son !]

SANCTA MARIA.

Mary ! To thee the humble cry.

What seek they ? Gifts to pride unknown.

They seek thy help—to pass thee by—

They murmur, “ Show us but thy Son.”

The childlike heart shall enter in :

The virgin soul its God shall see :

Mother, and maiden pure from sin,

Be thou the guide : the Way is He.

AUBREY DE VERE.

[*Handmaid of the Lord*]

ANCILLA DOMINI.

The crown of Creatures, first in place,
Was, of all creatures, creatures most :
By nature nothing ; all by grace ;
Redemption's first and loftiest boast.

Handmaid of God in heart and will
Without His life she seemed a death,
A void that He alone could fill,
A word suspended on His breath.

Yet—void and nothing—she in Him
The Creature's sole perfection found ;
She was the great Rock's shadow dim ;
She was the silence not the sound.

On golden airs, by Him upheld,
She knelt, a soft Subjection mute
A hushed Dependence, tranced and spelled,
Still yearning towards the Absolute.

She was a sea-shell from the deep
Of God ; her function this alone
Of Him to whisper as in sleep,
In everlasting undertone.

This hour on Him her eyes are set !
And those who tread the earth she trod
Like her themselves in her forget,
And her remember but in God.

AUBREY DE VERE.

Star of the Sea]

STELLA MARIS :

FISHERMAN'S SONG TO OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA.

Over the crested waves, sun sinking low,
Gliding by ocean's caves, rapid our prow ;
Grey grow the deepening skies, purpling the sea,
Softly our songs arise, Mother, to thee.

Advocate thou art sure, undefiled dove,
Mother of God, all-pure, thee let us love :
Plead for us, pray for us, trackless the way ;
Kindly words say for us, day after day.

Darker the looming sky, stormier the sea,
Pilgrims, we look on high, Mother, to thee ;
Waiting in faith and love, pure hearts to bring,
Long we to greet above Jesus our King.

He is thy Son, and thou gavest Him birth ;
He is thy God, and now rules o'er the earth ;
He as the Son of Man needed thy care,
Yet as thy God He can answer thy prayer.

O'er the wild waters now darkling and dun
Swift glides our vessel's prow, long sunk the
sun ;
Night is around us black, dangers increase ;
One star points out our track, homeward to
peace.

[*Star of the Sea*]

Lead us then, guard us aye, over life's sea,
Unto the perfect day where thou wilt be ;
Songs here are poor and short, comfort nor balm,
Guide us safe into port—heavenly calm.

Lily of Eden, hail ! black grows the night ;
Faith, hope, nor patience fail, waiting the light ;
Plead for us, pray for us, Mother Divine,
Kindly words say for us—Jesus is thine.

Lights flash around His throne, chants ever ring ;
Praising our God alone, Saviour and King,
Saints and the ransomed stand, Mother, near
thee,
Angels in mystic band, nevermore sea.

Gleam the strange lamps of fire, angelic throngs
Make up the heavenly choir, chanting their
songs ;
Perfect the peace, their joy never can pall,
Pleasure has no alloy, God is their All.

F. G. LEE.

JESUM OSTENDE.

Who doubts that thou art finite ? Who
Is ignorant that from Godhead's height
To what is loftiest here below
The interval is infinite ?

O Mary ! with that smile thrice-blest
Upon their petulance look down ;
Their dull negation, blind protest ;
Thy smile will melt away their frown.

Show them thy Son ! That hour their heart
Will beat and burn with love like thine ;
Grow large ; and learn from thee that art
Which communes best with things divine.

AUBREY DE VERE.

EVENING.

Hear thy children, gentlest Mother,
Prayerful hearts to thee arise ;
Hear us while our evening *Ave*
Soars beyond the starry skies.

Hear sweet Mother, hear the weary,
Borne upon life's troubled sea ;
Gentle, guiding Star of Ocean,
Lead thy children home to thee.

Still watch o'er us, dearest Mother,
From thy beauteous home above ;
Guard us from all harm and danger,
'Neath the sheltering wings of love.

F. STANFIELD.

THE VESPER BELL.

Hail, Mary, hail ! the western sky is glowing,
The sun sinks down 'neath yon empurpled hill,
From distant shores the fresh sea-breeze is blowing,
Sweet falls the music of the plashing rill.

Hail, Mary, hail ! that solemn stillness breaking,
Sure on the ear a sweeter music fell,
The distant echoes of the valley waking ;
Hark ! 'tis the summons of the vesper-bell.

Hail, Mary, hail ! like words from the departed
Speaks the monition of that saint-bell's toll,—
Of blessings slighted to the thankless-hearted,
Of peace and gladness to the earth-wearied soul.

Hail, Mary, hail ! the heavens are faintly lighted,
The sun is down, the flickering star-beams shine
Pale through the mist-wreaths, while on eyes
benighted
Streams a mild radiance from the tapered shrine.

Hail, Mary, hail ! the bell hath ceased its ringing,
The wearied labourer sinks to early rest.
But hark ! within the choir is sweetly singing
Of Him Who lay, dear Mother, on thy breast.

Hail, Jesus, hail ! to Thee our nightly greetings
Wakeful we raise, though men around us sleep ;
Thou wilt not chide Thy Church's oft repeatings ;
Do Thou our souls from works of darkness
keep !

H. N. OXENHAM.

AVE MARIA.

Ave Maria. Day declines,
Grows the peace of the evening star,
Shadows rise on the mountain lines—
Wide the heaven and God so far :
How should He stoop to the human sin ;
Mother and human take me in ;
Thou hast suffered and thou canst see ;
Ave Maria ; Ave Marie.

Ave Maria. At end of day
Rings thy peal on the evening air,
Calls the world to its homeward way,
Stays the heart in a pause of prayer ;
Ave Maria, by storm or star,
The thought of the wanderer turns from far
To the shrine of his haven—Light of the Sea :
Ave Maria ; Ave Marie.

Ave Maria. Years roll by ;
Thy dominion shall endure ;
All who make for the hard and high,
All the chivalrous, brave and pure,
Kneel in heart at an inward shrine
Built for a woman, and therefore thine—
For we lift our love to the light of thee :
Ave Maria ; Ave Marie.

SIR J. RENNELL RODD.

Ave Maria]

AVE MARIA.

Ave Maria ! Blesséd Maid !
Lily of Eden's fragrant shade,
Who can express the love
That nurtured thee, so pure and sweet,
Making thy heart a shelter meet
For Jesus' holy dove !

Ave Maria ! Mother blest
To whom, caressing and caressed,
Clings the eternal Child ;
Favoured beyond archangel's dream
When first on thee with tenderest gleam
The new-born Saviour smiled.

Thou wept'st, meek Maiden, Mother mild,
Thou wept'st upon thy sinless Child,
Thy very heart was riven ;
And yet, what mourning matron here
Would deem thy sorrows bought too dear
By all on this side heaven !

A Son that never did amiss,
That never shamed His Mother's kiss,
Nor crossed her fondest prayer :
E'en from the Tree He deigned to bow
For her His agonized brow,
Her, His sole earthly care.

Ave Maria ! thou whose name
All but adoring love may claim,
Yet may we reach thy shrine ;
For He, thy Son and Saviour, vows
To crown all lofty lowly brows
With love and joy like thine.

J. KEBLE.

THE THREE PEALS OF THE
ANGELUS.

Toll at the hour of dawn !
When the busy day hath begun,
That Christians may kneel in life's early morn
To Mary's incarnate Son ;
For at midnight hour St. Gabriel spoke,
And Christ was conceived ere morning broke,
Hail Mary, full of grace !

Toll at the mid-day hour !
Let the bell toll loud and long,
For the sun hath risen with burning power,
And the world and the flesh are waxing strong.
Through the long hours of the sultry day,
Stay with Thy children, Jesus, stay.
Hail Mary, full of grace !

Toll at the fall of eve !
When the busy day is done,
Lest Jesus thy soul in corruption leave,
Call yet again on Mary's Son ;
For at fall of eve, 'mid the gathering gloom,
His body was laid in St. Joseph's tomb.
Hail Mary, full of grace !

Toll for each hour of prayer !
Toll at morning, noon and night ;
Let the loud church-bells, like the angel, declare
The dawn of the world's true Light ;
Till the chimes that inspired our childhood's
faith
Are the requiem rung o'er the couch of death.
Hail Mary, full of grace !

H. N. OXENHAM.

EVENING ANGELUS.

We that have waited long for solitude
Have found it in the quiet twilight time,
Now that the sun hath done his downward climb,
And o'er the land grey lights and shadows brood :
Grey lights and shadows, solemn sounds and sad,
Blent with more solemn silence—while afar
The first faint brightness of the evening star
Maketh the wan sky glad.

Surely the light that fades, the light that grows,
The still wide fields, blue hills and restless tides
Are but the veil that half reveals, half hides
The light of Him from Whom all being flows :
Surely the sounds that through the twilight fall,
Of waves that weep and rivers that rejoice,
Are all but broken fragments of the voice
Of Him that made them all.

Glimpses and echoes ! hath not God bestowed
Some clearer music, some diviner light,
Some perfect hope of dawn to cheer the night,
Some perfect love to lift the life-long load ?
Hark ! from yon lonely chapel in the west—
Ave Maria ! Plena gratia :
And then, like angel-music far away,
Et homo factus est.

R. R. R.

ANGELUS-TIME.

Our earth grows virgin cool and calm,
Humble and simple, kind and new,
In bosomed hills the red sun falls—
And all at once the low bell calls
“ Now and in our last hour be true ! ”

Mother of earth, a child you stood
(The March eve glimmers now and then),
Shechinah of a Sunset fell
Into your bosom there to dwell
And rise to East for wandering men !

O you that know our pit-falls dark,
While high on heavenly hills you stand,
Come, Day-Shine, at the end of day !
As God stoop'd to you all the way,
Stoop to us—husht and bright and bland !

ARTHUR SHEARLY CRIPPS.

Rosaries]

OF ROSARIES.

Your rosary is all of white
In token of her purity ;
For her who kneels with stars bedight
Your rosary is all of white,
Fulfilled with silent silver light
Like moonbeams dreaming on the sea ;
Your rosary is all of white
In token of her purity.

My rosary is all of brown
In token of her sorrowing ;
For shame and woe that bowed her down
My rosary is all of brown,
With silver links like gleams that crown
The autumn's gloom with hopes of spring ;
My rosary is all of brown
In token of her sorrowing.

Her rosary is all of gold
In token of her queenliness ;
With curious carvings manifold,
Her rosary is all of gold
Whereon she prays with love untold
For all our sorrow and distress ;
Her rosary is all of gold
In token of her queenliness.

R. R. R.

[*A Song of Mary*]

CANTICUM BEATAE MARIAE DEIPARAE
SEMPER VIRGINI.

Mother of God on high !

We kneel at thy feet, dear Maid and Mother,
Who hast borne us God for our very Brother.

Mother and Maid ! we lie

Here at thy feet, who cry to thee, love thee,
Praising none, but the Lord above thee.

Mother of God's Own Child !

We who are called by His Name belong to thee,
We, thy children, chanting our song to thee.

Mother ! the days are wild :

Oh, let those arms and that sweet smile, round us,
Cherish and guard, or our sins confound us.

Star of the Sea ! we drive

Drenched and drowned, 'mid the waves that deride
us,

Lost on the rocks, if thou shine not and guide us.

How may we pass alive

Through the desert world, but with thee, the Rose
of it ?

By thy fragrance stayed, till the dim, parched
close of it.

Vine and Lily and Rose !

In His garden, lo ! thy Beloved sets us ;
Scorn not thou, though the earth forgets us.

A Song of Mary]

Lady of Grief ! unclose
Thy stricken soul to our souls that cry to thee,
Stricken of grief, that grief may fly to thee.

Lady of Joys ! though seven
Times seven are the charms of sin to beguile us,
Lost in thy charm, what sin shall defile us ?

Lady and Queen of Heaven !
Here, on earth, we would serve before thee,
In thy very court at last to adore thee.

Mary, Mother and Queen !
Bring us at length, where the angels lean,
Choir on choir, beneath thy grace :
Bring us all to that hidden place,
Where face to face thyself thou art seen,
O Mary Queen !

SELWYN IMAGE.

VIRGINI DEIPARAE.

Mother-Maid all-holy,
Throned upon thy knee,
Evermore the Almighty
Child and Lord we see,
While with awe thou gazest
On the wondrous face—
Blest among all women,
Mary, Full of grace.
Sung by million millions,
Since the distant day
When she walked among us
Her sweet stainless way :
How should we unworthy
To thy praise draw near ;
How uplift the chorus
Meet for heaven to hear ?
Of that perfect childhood,
Of that youth-time fair,
Scarce a whisper lingers
What thou wast, and where :
Flower amid the flowers
Faith beholds thee go,
Mystic Rose of Sharon,
Lily pure as snow.
O'er the holy bosom
She her faithful hands
Folds in silent waiting
Highest heaven's commands ;
Till the sun-bright angel
Spoke his awful word,
" Lo, thy will is my will,
Handmaid of the Lord."

Mother of God]

Angels and archangels
Now are round the Maid,
Where the world's Creator
At her knees is laid :
Where she worships o'er Him,
God and Man in one,
Son of highest heaven,
Mary's royal Son.

By our great first parent,
Tempted and beguiled,
We were cast from Eden
To the desert wild :
Second Eve and Mother,
By the gift she brought,
God, through Mary's sorrow,
Man's salvation wrought.

On the Babe thou smilest,
He on thee the while :
But His Father's business
Calls Him from thy smile :
In the secret archives
It is writ above,
Sevenfold swords shall pierce thee,
Sevenfold wounds of love.

Who should tell, when Mary
Touched the heart of woe ?
When she saw death's triumph
Up the 'dool-way go ?
When the whole world's burden
Bent Him 'neath the rood ?
When it shone, to save us,
With the precious Blood ?

By the cross now standing
In that utter woe,
Yet, some drops of gladness
In thy sorrow flow ;
As the loved disciple
Reverent leads thee home—
Queen in lowly refuge,
Heaven's own ante-room.

Now, through rest translated
To the realm assigned,
Crowned with grace we greet thee,
Crown of human-kind :
Yet, through all the ages,
Throned upon thy knee,
Mother-Maid, the Almighty
Child and Lord we see.

F. T. PALGRAVE.

THE GHYRLOND OF THE BLESSED
VIRGIN MARY.

Daughter and Mother and the Spouse of God,
Alike of kin to that most Blessed Trine
Of Persons, yet in Union, One, Divine,
How are thy gifts and graces blazed abro'd.

Most holy, and pure Virgin, Blessed Mayd,
Sweet Tree of Life, King David's Strength
and Tower,
The House of Gold, the Gate of Heaven's power,
The Morning-Star whose light our fall hath
stay'd.

Great Queen of Queens, most mild, most meek,
most wise,
Most venerable, Cause of all our joy,
Whose chearful look our sadness doth destroy,
And art the spotless Mirror to man's eyes.

The Seat of Sapience, the most lovely Mother,
And most to be admired of thy sexe,
Who mad'st us happy all, in thy reflexe,
By bringing forth God's Onely Son, no other.

Thou Throne of Glory, beauteous as the moone,
The rosie morning, or the rising sun,
Who like a giant hastes his course to run,
Till he hath reached his twofold point of noone.

How are thy gifts and graces blazed abro'd,
Through all the lines of this circumference,
T'imprint in all purged hearts this Virgin sence
Of being Daughter, Mother, Spouse of God?

BEN JOHNSON.

GOD'S MOTHER.

A Garden, bower in bower.
Grew waiting for God's hour.

Where no man ever trod,
This was the Gate of God.

The first Bower was red—
Her lips which "Welcome" said.

The second Bower was blue—
Her eyes that let God through.

The third Bower was white—
Her soul in God's sight.

These three Bowers of Love
Won Christ from Heaven above.

LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

FAIREST AMONG WOMEN.

Sweeter than sweetest roses far,
And lovelier than lilies are,
All, all that is most pure, most good,
In God-created Womanhood,
She was—and is—a Virgin-soul :
The stars compose her aureole,
The sunbeams clothe her, at her feet
The moonlight gathers soft and sweet :
In her all excellences meet.

ALFRED GURNEY.

SANCTA DEI GENITRIX.

O with what glorious lustre resplendent
Shinest thou, David's own royal descendant,
Mary, the Virgin who loftily dwellest,
And in God's favour all women excellest.

Mother, yet all honour virginal bearing,
For the Lord of all angels a chamber preparing,
Him in thy bosom thou chastely enshrinest,
And from thy womb cometh Christ the Divinest.

Whom the whole earth venerating adoreth,
Every knee bowing for ever imploreth,
From Whom we seek, with thee thy prayer lending,
Light in our darkness, and joy never ending.

Father of lights, Thou those blessings bestowing,
Grant for Thy Son, from the Holy Ghost flowing,
Who, as with Thee He in glory abideth,
All things for ever disposeth and guideth.

J. CHAMBERS.

A May-Day Song

A MAY-DAY SONG.

The happy birds "Te Deum" sing,
'Tis Mary's month of May,
Her smile turns winter into spring,
And darkness into day;
And there's a fragrance in the air,
The bells their music make,
And oh, the world is bright and fair,
And all for Mary's sake.

Where'er we seek the Holy Child,
At every sacred spot,
We meet the Mother undefiled,
Who shun her seek Him not;
At cloistered Nazareth we see,
At haunted Bethlehem,
The throne of Jesus, Mary's knee,
Her smile, His diadem.

The Daughter, Mother, Spouse of God,
None silence her appeal
Who seek to tread where Jesus trod,
What Jesus felt to feel;
O Virgin-born, from thee we learn
To love thy Mother dear—
Her teach us duly to discern
And rightly to revere.

* * *

How many are the thoughts that throng
On faithful souls to-day;
All year we sing our Lady's song,
'Tis still the song of May:

[A May-Day Song]

"Magnificat"—oh, may we feel
That rapture more and more,
And chiefly, Lord, what time we kneel
Thine altar-throne before.

* * *

Yes, Mary's month has come again,
The merry month of May;
And sufferers forget their pain,
And sorrows flee away,
And joys return; the hearts whose moan
Was desolate erewhile
Are blithe and gay once more, they own
The charm of Mary's smile.

Thy Son our Brother is, and we,
Whatever may betide,
A Mother, Mary, have in thee,
A guardian and a guide;
Thy smiles a tale of gladness tell
No words can ever say;
If but like thee we love Him well,
The year will all be May.

"All hail"—an angel spake the words
We lovingly repeat—
The song-notes of the singing birds,
They are not half so sweet;
This is a music that endures,
It cannot pass away,
For Mary's children it ensures
A never-ending May.

ALFRED GURNEY.

AUXILIUM CHRISTIANORUM.

In that war with no discharge,
Come, our Mother dear,
For some that die are motherless,
Some have no mother near !
Thy Child He'll have us "brethren Mine,"
So all that die are sons of thine,
Then bend to all thine ear !
Smoothe the pillow, kiss the brow—
Prepare us then,
Prepare us now—
That feet be clean, that eyes be clear,
In that black path to outface the fear—
Pray for us men !

ARTHUR SHEARLY CRIPPS.

[Our Solitary Boast

MATER IMMACULATA.

Mother, whose virgin bosom was uncrost
With the least shade of thought to sin allied;
Woman, above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast;
Purer than foam on central ocean tost;
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak strewn
With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue coast;
The image falls to earth.

Yet some, I ween,
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend,
As to a visible power, in which did blend
All that was mixed and reconciled in thee
Of mother's love with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Mother of Christ]

MATER CHRISTI.

Mother of God ! O, not in vain
We learn'd of old thy lowly strain,
Fain in thy shadow would we rest,
And kneel with thee, and call thee blest ;
With thee would "magnify the Lord,"
And if thou art not here adored,
Yet seek we, day by day, the love and fear
Which bring thee, with all saints, near and more
near.

What glory thou above hast won
By special grace of thy dear Son,
We see not yet, nor dare espy
Thy crowned form with open eye.
Rather beside the manger meek
Thee bending with veiled brow we seek,
Or where the angel in the thrice-great Name
Hailed thee, and Jesus to thy bosom came.

Thenceforth, Whom thousand worlds adore,
He calls thee Mother evermore ;
Angel nor saint His face may see
Apart from what He took of thee.
How may we choose but name thy name,
Echoing below in high acclaim
In holy Creed ? Since earthly song and prayer
Must keep faint time to the dread anthem there.

How, but in love on thine own days,
Thou blissful one, upon thee gaze ?
Nay, every day, each suppliant hour,
Whene'er we kneel in aisle or bower,

[*Mother of Christ*]

Thy glories we may greet unblamed,
Nor shun the lay by seraphs framed,
“Hail Mary, full of grace!” O, welcome sweet
Which daily in all lands all saints repeat!

Therefore, as kneeling day by day
We to our Father duteous pray,
So unforbidden may we speak
An Ave to Christ’s Mother meek.
(As children with “good morrow” come
To elders in some happy home :)
Inviting so the saintly host above
With our unworthiness to pray in love.

J. KEBLE.

Our Lord and Our Lady]

OUR LORD AND OUR LADY.

They warned Our Lady for the Child
That was Our blessed Lord,
And She took him into the desert wild,
Over the camel's ford.

And a long song She sang to Him
And a short story told :
And She wrapped Him in a woollen cloak
To keep Him from the cold.

But when Our Lord was grown a man
The Rich they dragged Him down,
And they crucified Him in Golgotha
Out and beyond the Town.

They crucified Him on Calvary,
Upon an April day ;
And because He had been her little Son
She followed Him all the way.

Our Lady stood beside the Cross,
A little space apart,
And when She heard Our Lord cry out
A sword went through Her Heart.

They laid Our Lord in a marble tomb,
Dead, in a winding sheet.
But Our Lady stands above the world,
With the white Moon at Her feet.

HILAIRE BELLOC.

[*Madonna di San Sisto*]

ON THE MADONNA DI SAN SISTO.

Behold, by Raphael shown, Love's sacrament :
Earth's curtains part ; God's veil is lifted up ;
There comes a Child, forth from His bosom sent
To rule the feast of life, His bread and cup,
His purpose making plain with man to sup.
Out-streams the light, accomplished is the sign—
A Virgin-Mother clasps a Babe Divine.

Her lovely feet descend the cloudy stair,
Great succour bringing to a world forlorn ;
On either side a man and woman share
A common rapture, welcoming the dawn
Of God's new day, the everlasting morn—
Of such a day as shall, from east to west,
Dispel the darkness, doing Love's behest.

He turns a face all radiant to the sun,
Enamoured of the sight he looks upon,
She to the end of what is now begun
Down-gazes, stooping, shadowed by the throne
Made by a Maiden's arms, Maternal grown ;
Than ivory most fair, than purest gold,
More pure, more fair and stronger to uphold.

On cherubs twain, whom watching has made wise,
A spell has fallen—a prophetic dream ;
Their upward-gazing and far-seeing eyes,
Like stars reflected in the tranquil stream,
To look beyond the Child and Mother seem ;
A twisted thorn-branch and a cross to them
Are manifest—His throne and diadem.

Madonna di San Sisto

High heaven open stands, and there a crowd
Of worshippers with love-lit eyes appear,
Like stars down-gazing through a fleecy cloud,
Dimly discerned as morning draweth near,
Spreading a radiant pall upon night's bier.
The blessed thing the sign doth signify
They partly know, and are made glad thereby.

But, more the Mother knows, and more she sees
Than soaring angel, or than climbing saint ;
Her heart familiar grown with mysteries
Of God's own working under love's constraint—
The remedy she knows for man's complaint.
The clouds are all beneath her, and above
The light of life, the radiancy of love.

And He, Whom Lord of Love and Life we hail,
Is on her bosom borne, a Blossom fair ;
The pentecostal breath that lifts her veil
Has fanned His royal brow, and stirred His hair,
And kissed His lips just parted for a prayer.
That Spirit-wind shall blow, that Face shall shine,
Till all His brothers know their Father's Sign.

ALFRED GURNEY.

MATER AMABILIS

(as painted by Botticelli).

Mary, on the Prince of peace thy gladness
 Gleams from radiant eyes ;
But their light is touched with passing sadness,
 Like our English summer skies.

Angels' arms above thy head are holding
 Crowns of golden stars ;
But the baby hands thy breast enfolding
 Show to thee their future scars.

Lilies cense thee with their exhalations,
 But thy heart has guessed
Slanders of the scoffing generations
 Who will call thee cursed, not blessed.

So when clouds of faint foreboding sorrow
 From an unknown sea
Come to warn me of a broken morrow,
 Mother Mary, pray for me.

LEIGHTON PULLAN.

Our Lady of the Rocks]

FOR OUR LADY OF THE ROCKS,
BY LEONARDO DA VINCI.

Mother, is this the darkness of the end,
The Shadow of Death ? and is that outer sea
Infinite imminent Eternity ?
And does the death-pang by man's seed sustained
In Time's each instant cause thy face to bend
Its silent prayer upon the Son, while He
Blesses the dead with His hand silently
To His long day which hours no more offend ?

Mother of grace, the pass is difficult,
Keen as these rocks, and the bewildered souls
Throng it like echoes, blindly shuddering
through.
Thy name, O Lord, each spirit's voice extols,
Whose peace abides in the dark avenue
Amid the bitterness of things occult.

D. G. ROSSETTI.

FOR FRA ANGELICO'S MADONNA OF
THE STAR.

As when the night is deepest, and the far
Forgotten day is very vague and vain,
And no man knows if dawn may come again,
Until the day-star rise, oracular :
So in the night, God sent thee to unbar
The doors of day and bring the glorious reign
Of thy dear Son, of Mother without stain,
Thou star-crowned Queen of Heaven, thou
Morning Star.

O Mary Mother, help my halting faith :
The night is round me and I cannot see ;
The stars are hidden by the world's dead breath :
Be thou my Star, and let me follow thee
Through this dim valley of the shadow of death,
Into the sunlight of God's Majesty.

RALPH ADAMS CRAM.

FOR BOTTICELLI'S MADONNA OF
THE MAGNIFICAT.

Circled with solemn angels see her there,
Mother of God, with the Incarnate Word
Throned in her virgin bosom, and adored
Of earth and heaven ; and she, all unaware
Of that bright crown the bending angels bear
Above her weary head, with sweet accord
Writing : " My soul doth magnify the Lord,
And Holy shall his Name be everywhere."

Behold how sad she is, and in her eyes
Infinite sorrow, infinitely fair :
Not her own mother's grief it is that lies
Upon her soul a weary weight of care,
Not pity of self, but the blind, yearning cry
Of the world's hopeless, helpless misery.

RALPH ADAMS CRAM.

[Through the Child-bearing

MOTHERHOOD BLESSED IN MARY.

The days, the doubts, the dreams of pain
Are over, not to come again,
And from the menace of the night
Has dawned the day-star of delight :
My baby lies against me pressed—
Thus, Mother of God, are mothers blessed !

His little head upon my arm,
His little body soft and warm,
His little feet that cannot stand
Held in the heart of this my hand,
His little mouth close on my breast—
Thus, Mary's Son, are mothers blessed.

All dreams of deeds, all deeds of day
Are very faint and far away,
Yet you some day will stand upright
And fight God's foes, in manhood's might,
You—tiny, worshipped, clasped, caressed—
Thus, Mother of God, are mothers blessed.

Whatever grief may come to be
This hour divine goes on for me.
All glorious is my little span,
Since I, like God, have made a man,
A little image of God's best—
Thus, Mary's Son, are mothers blessed.

Come change, come loss, come worlds of tears,
Come endless chain of empty years ;
They cannot take away the hour
That gives me You—my bird, my flower !
Thank God for this ! Leave God the rest !—
Thus, Mother of God, are mothers blessed.

E. NESBIT.

MAGNIFICAT.

THIS IS OUR LADY'S SONG, AND IT IS SAID EVERY DAY AT EVENSONG RATHER THAN AT OTHER TIMES, FOR DIVERS CAUSES. ONE FOR IN THE EVENSONG TIME OF THE WORLD OUR LADY BY HER SINGULAR ASSENT BROUGHT IN HEALTH TO MANKIND. ANOTHER CAUSE IS THAT WE SHOULD DAILY HAVE IN MIND THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHICH WAS WROUGHT IN THE EVENTIDE OF THE WORLD, FOR JOY OF WHICH THIS SONG WAS MADE. THE THIRD CAUSE IS FOR OUR LADY IS LIKENED TO THE EVEN STAR, THAT BEGINNETH TO APPEAR IN THE EVENTIDE. THE FOURTH CAUSE IS THAT THE MINDS THAT HAVE BEEN WEARIED AND LABOURED IN THE DAY WITH MANY THOUGHTS AND BUSINESSES, SHOULD THEN BE COMFORTED WITH THE SONG OF JOY OF OUR LADY, AND BE HOLPEN BY HER PRAYERS AGAINST TEMPTATIONS OF THE NIGHT.

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